

Your Well-Being Information Resource

Well-Being Liaison Office (WBLO)



FLO Notes



Soldiers on Point for the Nation – Persuasive in Peace, Invincible in War

Volume 17, Issue 4

April 2004

Chief's Corner

Seeking understanding upon Soldiers' return

Bringing Soldiers back from war is something we have done for more than 229 years. For as long as we've done this, you might think that we would've perfected the system for doing this by now. We are light-years ahead from where we were decades ago.

Today there are a multitude of resources available to support our Soldiers and their families such as the Army Information Line — 1-800-833-6622, Army One Source, Family Life Chaplains, and Operation Ready materials just to name a few.

If we were dealing with the same people each and every time we deployed, this would continue to get easier, but this is not the case. Many of our Soldiers and their families are new to this, and those who are not new to the reunion of a battle-hardened Soldier, that great warrior, and his or her return, find challenges anew each time they return.

The Soldier's perspective is different from ours here at home, and though we may wish we had been there, we were not. Those Soldiers who were over there certainly didn't experience the feeling of what it was like waiting for them to return. Additionally, what a combat Soldier now sees as normal, likely does not look quite the same as it used to.

In talking with World War II Soldiers and Vietnam veterans, many

tell us that for years they didn't talk about their experiences because those experiences were too painful.

However, they now say that they wish they had talked about their experiences because the healing begins when the talking starts.

Talking and sharing your experiences with each other is smart. It is mentally and emotionally healthy, and shows respect for the tremendous sacrifices our great Soldiers and their families have made for this great nation.

Each one of you has a story. That story is valid. Your story is worthy of an audience that needs to understand. Your first audience should be the one you love the most.

When someone asks what's wrong and you hear yourself say, "you just don't understand," then know the reason they don't understand is not because they were not there.

I mentioned earlier the many resources — some of which are included on page 4 — that we have to support our Soldiers and their families. Please keep in mind that your Army Family Web resource is *Army Families Online*, and it can be found at www.wblo.org.

Celebrate volunteerism in your community

The contributions of volunteers will be recognized in ceremonies across the United States during National Volunteer Week April 18 through 24. The theme of this year's celebration is "Volunteers Inspire By Example," and it will set the stage for national, regional and local organizations to

applaud the efforts of men, women and young people while encouraging others to help solve serious problems through volunteerism.

This year's observance marks the 30th anniversary of National Volunteer Week, which began in 1974 when President Richard Nixon signed an executive order establishing the week as an annual celebration of volunteering.

During this year's celebration, the Army will highlight the tremendous efforts of volunteers through a variety of recognition ceremonies and newspaper articles, while supporting several service projects.

"National Volunteer Week is an excellent opportunity to salute our unsung heroes and encourage others to get involved," said Robert K. Goodwin, president and CEO of the Points of Light Foundation. "Volunteering is not just nice, it's necessary."

For more information on volunteerism, contact your Installation Volunteer Coordinator, or visit the Points of Light Web site at www.pointsoflight.org/NVW.



Military Spouse Day '04

Begin making plans now to recognize the efforts of military spouses this year on Military Spouse Day — May 7.



The first Military Spouse Day was observed May 23, 1984, when a proclamation signed by President Ronald Reagan recognized the contributions of military spouses to the spirit and Well-Being of our Soldiers and the general welfare of the communities in which they live.

In 1985, Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger established Military Spouse Day as the Friday before Mother's Day.

As volunteers, military spouses have provided invaluable service and leadership in educational, community, recreational, religious, social and cultural endeavors.

Army spouses have always made their own, unique contributions to the Well-Being of the force through numerous wars and all the periods of restless peace in between.

The dedication and support of Army spouses is never more important than during times of war. The Army family remains strong and vibrant, and for that we owe a tremendous amount to Army spouses who rely on their own remarkable personal courage, indomitable strength and great resolve to sustain Army families.

Please take time on May 7 to pause and take the opportunity to formally recognize Army spouses in your community — for their service, their sacrifice and for unyielding devotion to our Soldiers and our Army.

Army improves Medical Holdover conditions

Reserve Component Soldiers left in Medical Holdover (MHO) status as their units demobilize can be assured that the Army is prepared to provide expert medical care and expeditious administrative support.

Medical Holdover is a term applying to Army National Guard and Army Reserve Soldiers separated from their

units and needing definitive healthcare based on medical conditions identified while they were on active duty in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

A new initiative increasing the Army's resources to care for some MHO Soldiers is the Community-Based Health-Care Organization (CBHCO). A CBHCO is a task-organized element designed to coordinate health care, process medical evaluation boards and provide command and control for MHO Soldiers receiving treatment or recuperating near their homes using healthcare options that are available locally.

CBHCOs are now coordinating care for MHO Soldiers near their homes in Florida, California, Wisconsin and Arkansas. Other CBHCOs will be developed later as needed.

Col. Carol Swanson, senior case manager at Medical Command Headquarters, said each CBHCO is staffed by 30 to 35 members of the Army National Guard, with an Army Reserve liaison. They provide care for both Guardsmen and reservists.

Swanson said MHO patients stay on active duty orders while being treated and recuperating.

"Some require medical boards. Some can be treated and go back to duty. Some can be released to go back to their civilian jobs," she said. "We don't want to release them home if they're not able to work."

Soldiers are screened at a Soldier Readiness Process site before and after deployment.

If a condition is identified requiring MHO, the patient is assigned a National Guard nurse as a case manager. The case manager recommends to the primary-care provider and the hospital deputy commander for clinical services if the patient's condition must be treated at the hospital at the mobilization site, or if that patient can go to a CBHCO near his or her home.

Medical care will be provided at Army medical facilities if possible, but may also come from Air Force, Navy or Veterans Affairs resources, or from civilian providers through the TRI-CARE system.

Soldiers who need Medical Evaluation Boards or Physical Evaluation Boards can have them done at the CBHCO.

When patients are on Army installations more than 30 days, the Installation Management Agency is responsible for providing quarters that accommodate the patients' medical conditions and are safe, secure and climate controlled with indoor restrooms and privacy between sleeping areas.

Regional Medical Commands (RMC) are responsible for privileging healthcare providers at the CBHCOs, reviewing medication cases, assisting in quality assurance oversight and providing medical, technical and administrative assistance. Swanson said each RMC will have a mobilized Army Reserve nurse assigned as a senior case manager. This officer will oversee tracking of patients and help coordinate the handoff from active medical treatment facility to CBHCO.

Award honors Military Family Support efforts

Are you a part of a volunteer group helping military families? Are you serving families of servicemembers deployed in the Global War on Terrorism? Are you striving to improve the



quality of life for families whose loved ones are serving in Afghanistan or Iraq? Does your group have an idea or plan that needs support? If the answer to these questions is "yes" then your organization may be eligible to receive "The Newman's Own Award."

For the fifth consecutive year, Newman's Own, Fisher House and the Military Times Media Group join in announcing the Newman's Own Award. Volunteer organizations are invited to compete for a share of \$50,000 in grants. Organizations just need to provide information on their innovative plan that improves the quality of life for military families and their communities, and these organizations could be awarded funding to implement their plans.

Judges will rank all submissions, and the one deemed most outstanding will receive a \$10,000 grant. The remaining \$40,000 will be allocated to

other organizations by the judges. Please remember that the judges are looking for those good ideas which capture the spirit of volunteerism — organizations should primarily be those with volunteers rather than paid professional staffs. Army Family Readiness Groups, Navy Ombudsmen, Marine Corps Key Network Volunteers, Air Force Family Support Centers are all examples of organizations working to support military families. However there are many others. All entries must be received by June 1. The competition does have specific rules of eligibility:

To be eligible, the organization must be an IRS 501(c)(3) not-for-profit or a private organization as defined in Department of Defense Instruction 1000.15, dated October 23, 1997. All applications must be received by April 30, 2003.

The Newman's Own Award is funded through the sale of Newman's Own products at military commissaries worldwide, Fisher House Foundation and Military Times Media Group. World War II veteran and actor Paul Newman donates all profits from the sale of Newman's Own products to charitable and educational causes. Since 1982, Newman has donated more than \$150 million to thousands of charities.

More information, applications and detailed instructions are available from the Fisher House Web site — www.fisherhouse.org.

DoD establishes Sexual Assault Hot Line

The Department of Defense announced recently that an additional toll-free telephone number has been established for individuals who want to contact or provide information to the DoD Task Force on Care for Victims of Sexual Assault.

The number, 1-800-497-6261, is staffed from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. EST, Monday through Friday. The department's hot line will supplement those previously established by the services.

Defense Secretary Donald H.

Rumsfeld also ordered a senior-level inquiry into the reported sexual assaults in Iraq and Kuwait, and how the services treat victims of sexual assault. The Army and Air Force have also opened similar investigations.

Defense leaders believe that information from the call center will assist the task force and DoD officials in developing policies and programs to improve assistance for victims of assaults and enhance prevention efforts.

Fund aides families of fallen servicemembers

The Fallen Patriot Fund of the Mark Cuban Foundation was established to

help families of U.S. servicemembers who were killed, or seriously injured, in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Financial resources are vital to enhancing the sustainability of the family unit who has suffered a loss because their loved one sacrificed themselves for freedom.

Within that group, grant recipients will be selected according to criteria established by the Mark Cuban Foundation. All proceeds will be disbursed to approved recipients.

"Now is a good time to take steps to support our troops," said Mark Cuban, president and chairman, HDNet and owner of the Dallas Mavericks. "I am very excited to be working with Bank of America to accept donations to the Fallen Patriot Fund to provide support to the spouses and children of our service people who have sacrificed themselves in service of our country during Operation Iraqi Freedom. In support of the Fallen Patriot Fund, I will be matching up to \$1 million in total contributions to the fund. I encourage everyone to support our fallen heroes and find their closest



Bank of America banking center and truly show their support."

Bank of America will accept donations for the Fallen Patriot Fund at all Bank of America banking centers. Additionally, the Bank of America Foundation will also match their associate's donations dollar for dollar from gifts of \$25 to \$5,000.

For more information on the Fallen Patriot Fund, visit www.fallenpatriot.org, or write to the Fallen Patriot Fund, c/o Bank of America Private Bank, TX1-492-19-09, P.O. Box 832409, Dallas, TX 75283-2409.

Guide helps deployed families stay connected

A new, free guide offered by the National Fatherhood Initiative is designed to help servicemembers maintain their important role in their children's lives during military deployments.

"The Deployed Fathers and Families Guide," released in January, offers tips to help families cope with the practical as well as emotional aspects of family separations caused by deployments, explained Vincent DiCaro of the National Fatherhood Initiative.

The guide expands upon the institute's popular brochure, "10 Ways to Stay Involved With Your Children During Deployment."

DiCaro said the new guide builds on tips in the brochure to help family members prepare to handle the many day-to-day issues within households typically handled by the servicemember who is about to deploy. The guide also addresses the emotional challenges families face during deployments, particularly those to dangerous regions of the world.

"Fathers play a unique and irreplaceable role within the family," said DiCaro. "Our goal is to help them stay as connected as possible when they are gone."

For a free copy of the guide or brochure, fill out the electronic request form on the institute's Web site — www.fatherhood.org. The site also

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allows military children to post an online message to their deployed fathers.

The brochure and guide also are available by calling (301) 948-0599 or writing to:

National Fatherhood Institute
101 Lake Forest Blvd.
Gaithersburg, MD 20877

American Red Cross serves Soldiers' needs

Members of the U.S. Armed Forces don't have to be actively deployed to benefit from American Red Cross Armed Forces Emergency Services. The Red Cross provides services to more than 1.5 million members of the National Guard and reserves when they are living in their local communities and when they are mobilized. American Red Cross services are also available to members of the Reserve Officers Training Corps, recruiters, U.S. Coast Guard, commissioned corps of the U.S. Public Health Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, retirees and to their families.

The American Red Cross wants members of the National Guard, reserves and other community-based military personnel to *Get to Know Us Before You Need Us*. All too often, members of the National Guard and reserves don't know about available Red Cross services until they are mobilized.

Knowing in advance that communication links, access to financial assistance and counseling will be available in an emergency brings peace of mind to the military and to the families from which they are separated. Similarly, knowing that Red Cross services are available to inactive servicemembers and their family members provides a safety net in times of need. The *Get to Know Us Before You Need Us: Serving the Community-Based Military and Their Families* pamphlet (ARC 1129), can be obtained from your local Red Cross.

Red Cross chapters are listed in local telephone books and on the American Red Cross Web site — www.redcross.org/where/where.html.

Red Cross services for inactive and active members of the National Guard

and reserves include:

- Emergency communication
- Access to emergency financial assistance
- Counseling
- Veterans services
- Information and referral provided by Armed Forces Emergency Services.

For help during inactive duty, members of the National Guard and reserves and their families should contact their local Red Cross chapters.

When on active duty, members of the National Guard and reserves can get Red Cross help by contacting base/installation operators, local on-base Red Cross stations and Red Cross workers deployed with America's military in the field.

If the Reserve-Component Soldier is away from home due to military duty and the family needs to get in touch with him or her during an emergency, visit the Red Cross Web site to find out how to use the American Red Cross.

Well-Being Liaison Office

As stated in the "Chief's Corner," a number of resources exist to assist Soldiers and their families in all stages of the Deployment Cycle.

The Army's Well-Being Liaison Office (WBLO) provides members of the Army family with a number of resources — the Army

Information Line, *Army Families Online*, *FLO Notes* and *Army Well-Being* — which are part of an integrated service delivery system.

The Army Information Line (1-800-833-6622) is a toll-free resource and referral service. The line is staffed between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. EST, Monday through Friday; afterhours callers can leave voicemail that will be answered when the line re-opens. This line serves as a safety net for those with issues or concerns pertaining to Army life, and have exhausted all other resources.

Additionally, the WBLO provides members of the Army family with a valuable resource that is accessible 24-

hours a day, seven-days a week — *Army Families Online*, which is located on the Internet at www.wblo.org.

Army Families Online is the best place to answers to many routine questions on topics ranging from pay and allowances to Army Community Service, or from family readiness issues to deployment cycle support resources. Additionally, the site provides a wealth of news and information to help keep members of the Army family in tune to issues that affect how they live and work.

This online service continues to grow and develop to ensure that it will always be able to meet the needs of our Soldiers and their families.

Another helpful resource available to Soldiers and their immediate families is Army One Source (AOS). This service also available via a toll-free number (1-800-464-8107), and if for some reason the toll-free number is unavailable callers can reach AOS by placing a collect call to (484) 530-5889.

AOS also provides toll-free service for callers outside the continental United States (OCONUS) when they dial 1-800-464-81077 (all 11 digits must be dialed). The service also provides access for the hearing impaired (1-800-364-9188) and speakers of the Spanish language (1-888-732-9020).

The service provided by AOS is supplemental to existing family programs, and is available 24-hours a day, seven-days a week to active-duty and mobilized reserve-component Soldiers, and deployed civilian employees worldwide.

Additionally, for those returning from deployment who are in need of counseling services, AOS can provide referrals to professional civilian counselors for assistance in the continental United States (CONUS). Counseling for those OCONUS is provided through existing contracted marriage and family counselors. For more information, visit the AOS Web sites — www.armyonesource.com or www.lifeworks.com (User ID is "army" and the password is "one-source").

